**Taking Personal Responsibility**

Excerpts from President Barack Obama, commencement address at Kalamazoo High School June 7, 2010

*…….. “Don’t make excuses. Take responsibility not just for your successes, but for your failures as well.*

*The truth is, no matter how hard you work, you won’t necessarily ace every class or succeed in every job. There will be times when you screw up, when you hurt the people you love, when you stray from your most deeply held values.*

*And when that happens, it’s the easiest thing in the world to start looking around for someone to blame. Your professor was too hard; your boss was a jerk; the coach was playing favorites; your friend just didn’t understand.”*

(“President Obama Gives Commencement,” 2010)

Full text: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-kalamazoo-central-high-school-commencement>

**Your Writing Assignment**

1. Please think about times somebody has blamed you for something, when it was really their responsibility. Write about at least one time here:

2. Please think about times when you have blamed someone else for your mistake. Write about at least  
one time here:

3. Please think about times when you have taken responsibility for your mistakes. Write about at least  
one time here:

4. Next time you feel like blaming someone, what could you do instead? What could help you remember  
to do this?

5. If I take more personal responsibility, and blame others less, I think I am more likely to feel:

Reproduced with permission from Ferlazzo, Helping Students Motivate Themselves: Practical Answers to Classroom Challenges. Copyright 2011 Eye On Education, Inc. Larchmont, NY. All rights reserved. www.eyeoneducation.com